

REMARKS

Claims 1-26 and 28-32 are pending of which claims 1-16 (drawn to the apparatus) are withdrawn and claims 17-26 and 28-32 are under examination; claim 27 has been canceled and no new claims have been presented. Claims 17, 24, 25, 26, 29, and 31 have been amended herein.

The examiner is thanked for noting the enumeration error with regard to claim 22; the dependency of the now-appropriately re-numbered claims 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, and 31 has been changed to reflect the claim re-numbering.

The examiner is authorized to cancel the withdrawn claims in the event the claims under examination are found allowable.

This paper is in response to the Office action dated April 5, 2007 in which independent claim 17 was objected to under 35 USC §112 ¶2 as to a proper antecedent for the word "material". Additionally, independent claim 17 and claims 21-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Japan '834 in view of Fujimoto (U.S. 5,939,139), claims 18-20 and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Japan '834 in view of Fujimoto further in view of Martin (US 5,766,496) or Ellerson (U.S. 5,252,179), and, lastly, claims 27-32 were rejected over the Japan '834, Fujimoto and Martin or Ellerson further in view of Ni (U.S. 6,200,387)

A reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the discussion below.

Independent method claim 17 has been amended to address the 35 USC §112 ¶2 concern to more fully define the method as including a position-maintaining attribute for the deposited encapsulant removing agent and a definition of the heated gas flow as insufficient to cause the encapsulant-removing agent to migrate from its initially deposited position on the surface of the integrated circuit.

Dependent claim 27 has been canceled and minor amendments have been made to various of the dependent claims 17-20 and 22-23 to provide, *inter alia*, language consistent with claim 17 or assure appropriate dependency.

It is submitted that the applied references do not anticipate nor render the pending claims obvious.

The primary reference, Japan '834, teaches the "dropping" of a varnish solvent onto a varnished printed circuit board while the printed circuit board is under a ventilation hood; the solvent-treated varnish is removed by "wiping, blowing, or sucking." Fujimoto teaches removal of accumulated spin-coated resin from the peripheral edge of a wafer W in a spin coat machine. As shown in FIGS. 3/4 (and in FIG. 6) of Fujimoto, a first nozzle 21 sprays solvent while a second nozzle 22 directs a gas flow to blow the solvent/resin

mix off the edge of the spinning wafer W. A suction intake 23 (FIGS. 3 and 5) removes the solvent/resin mix blown off the edge of the wafer W. Martin and Ellerson both teach the use of an acid as the removal agent and, lastly, Ni presents various flow/temperature controls in the context of batch-processing semiconductor wafers.

It is noted that Fujimoto teaches "vigorous" film removal at Col. 5, Lines 34-37 (i.e., "... the solvent and gas can be sprayed out vigorously, increasing film-removing ability and the cleaning ability."); Fujimoto's teaching is consistent with the "blowing" teaching of Japan '834 but clearly in a direction opposite to that of claim 17 and its dependent claims. The "acid teaching" of Martin or Ellerson and the temperature control disclosure of Ni do not compensate for the deficiencies of any hypothetical Japan '834/Fujimoto combination in view of independent claim 17 and its dependent claims.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance and an indication thereof is respectfully requested.

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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wallace G. Walter", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Wallace G. Walter
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